

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:ENADEAU

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TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PRESS ITEMS - SECRETARY'S TESTIMONY

AS DISCUSSED WITH BLAKEN BY PHONE, FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
ON PANAMA FROM PRESS ITEMS RESULTING FROM SECRETARY'S
TESTIMONY BEFORE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
TODAY. WE WILL PROVIDE TRANSCRIPT OF TESTIMONY ASAP.

1. KENNETH J. FREED, AP -- IN OTHER MATTERS, KISSINGER
ALSO SAID, "I AM NOT SURE WE WILL COME TO AN AGREEMENT"
WITH PANAMA ON A NEW TREATY COVERING THE PANAMA CANAL.

THIS WAS CONSIDERABLY LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN PREVIOUS
ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS ABOUT THE LIKELIHOOD OF A NEW
AGREEMENT TO REPLACE THE TREATY ORIGINALLY SIGNED IN 1903.

NEGOTIATIONS ARE CONTINUING BECAUSE "WE DO NOT WANT A
GUERRILLA WAR," KISSINGER SAID, "BUT I CANNOT TELL YOU YET
WHETHER AN AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE."

KISSINGER TOLD THE COMMITTEE THAT THE CANAL WITH ITS MANY
LOCKS IS SUBJECT TO SABOTAGE "AND IF IT COMES TO IT" THE
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UNITED STATES WILL PROTECT THE WATERWAY, "WE WILL NOT BE

BLACKMAILED."

AT THE SAME TIME, THE SECRETARY SAID, FAILURE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WOULD LEAD TO SEVERE PROBLEMS WITH THE REST OF LATIN AMERICA AS WELL AS PRESENT THE POSSIBILITY OF A GUERRILLA WAR.

"WE HAVE AN OBLIGATION TO KEEP IT FROM COMING TO THAT," THE SECRETARY SAID.

2. WASHINGTON, UPI -- SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, CITING LATIN AMERICA'S "EXTREME CONCERN" OVER CUBAN ACTIONS IN AFRICA, TODAY WARNED THAT FIDEL CASTRO'S MILITARY ADVENTURE IN ANGOLA WAS "OMINOUS PRECEDENT FOR INTERVENTION" IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

HE ALSO TOLD THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE THE UNITED STATES IS ABLE TO PROTECT THE PANAMA CANAL AGAINST SABOTAGE AND GUERRILLA WARFARE. "BUT WE WILL NOT BE BLACKMAILED INTO SUCH A SITUATION...AND ARE CONTINUING THE NEGOTIATIONS (WITH PANAMA) TO AVOID THAT," HE SAID.

3. FOR ART MOLEON, WASHINGTON, AP -- EL SECRETARIO DE ESTADO HENRY A. KISSINGER DEFENDIO HOY LA NECESIDAD DE LLEGAR A UN ACUERDO SOBRE EL FUTURO DEL CANAL DE PANAMA.

KISSINGER DIJO AL COMITE DE ASUNTOS EXTERNOS DE LA CAMARA BAJA QUE EN LA AUSENCIA DE ESE ACUERDO SE PODRIAN REGISTRAR ACTOS DE SABOTAJE O INCLUSO UNA GUERRA DE GUERRILLAS QUE FORZARIA A LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS "A DESPLAZAR UNA CONSIDERABLY FUERZA" PARA DEFENDER LA VIA INTEROCEANICA

KISSINGER DIJO QUE "NO DEBEMOS SEER CHANTAJEADOS PERO TAMPOCO DEBEMOS EXPONERNOS A ESOS PELIGROS SIN ANTES HABER AGOTADO UN SINCERO ESFUERZO PARA LOGRAR UN ACUERDO SATISFACTORIO PARA LAS PARTES". KISSINGER

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